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Q1 Candidate's Name

Cynthia Given

Q2 Candidate's District

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Q3 Will you support closure of any State Operated Developmental Centers and shift corresponding resources toward integrated, community-based living options? **No**

Q4 Would you support legislation to eliminate the subminimum wage for workers with disabilities in Illinois? **No**

Q5 Do you support per-beneficiary funding caps in the Illinois Medicaid system? **No**

Q6 Should Illinois Medicaid and SNAP benefits have a mandatory work component? **No**

Q7 Would you advocate raising Medicaid reimbursement rates for home-based nursing services? **Yes**

Q8 Do you support a fair (graduated) income tax? **Yes**

Q9 Will you demand improved disability access to the State Capitol complex and General Assembly, including but not limited to a formal reasonable accommodation request process for public proceedings, provision of key materials in alternate formats, and captioning of floor proceedings? **Yes**

Candidate's Questionnaire 2018

Q10 What will you do to ensure people with disabilities, who identify as members of other marginalized communities (e.g. black/brown, LGBTQ, immigrant, etc.) know they are welcome to live and pursue their full potential in Illinois? In other words, how can you address systemic oppression against multiply marginalized disabled people?

I just toured a facility in my district that is dependent on state funding. If elected, I will remain in touch with the people who run such facilities to make sure we are providing ALL people the help they need. The short answer: listen, research, and support legislation that protects our diverse population.

Q11 How will you ensure a free and appropriate public education for Illinois students with disabilities?

I support access to education for ALL students. My mother has a learning disability and is now a licensed esthetician thanks to help from our state in adapting her curriculum, testing environment, and even her workplace. This issue is personal to me.

Q12 How will you work to expand affordable, accessible, integrated housing options in Illinois?

I live in an area that lacks affordable housing. I do not know what legislation exists, but I would be interested in taking more facility tours to see what is working elsewhere and see if that could be replicated in my district to help people have access to affordable, accessible, and integrated housing.

Q13 What would you do to make Illinois more compliant with the Ligas, Williams, and Colbert Consent Decrees?

I'm not sure if I understand every aspect of these decrees (I am absolutely willing to learn and started to conduct research). I also asked my sister about these issues. She is a registered nurse who works in a long term care facility. As far as ensuring compliance, I would work with other legislators who also advocate for people with disabilities. I also think facility tours would shed some light on how compliance (or lack of) is happening in the district and ask providers how I could help. I do not think it would take long to get up to speed, but from what I've researched, the role of legislators in the past has been to be a check to our governor (who has been sued multiple times to get care for people with disabilities).

Q14 How will you play a role in making business accessible to all customers with disabilities?

I own a business that is accessible to all customers with disabilities. It is a very important issue for me because my mom has physical and learning disabilities. She works with me, and I would be happy to help other business owners understand the importance of making their businesses accessible. We have a lot of older buildings in my district, so some owners may want to make their businesses accessible but would not be able to do so without incentives from our state government. I would support these incentives.

Q15 What will you do to provide full and equal access to public transportation in Illinois?

This issue is very important! Just the other day my sister (a long term care nurse) described multiple issues with local public transportation. One vehicle did not have air conditioning. There is no eating allowed, and it is not uncommon for people to ride 8+ hours to and from doctor's appointments. You can see how clients with disabilities and illnesses could be impacted. We need adequate funding for rural health care, and that includes transportation. I support fully funding public transportation.

Candidate's Questionnaire 2018

Q16 How can wages for Illinois' Personal Assistants, Direct Support Professionals, Community Care Program and Homemaker service providers be improved and/or stabilized?

In my rural area, businesses would not be able to survive a wage increase to \$15/hr. However, I would support a gradual increase. As a business owner, I know that labor can be costly. Having said that, providers deserve a living wage. I would support a gradual increase in the wages of providers up to a living wage.

Q17 Illinois has 19,000+ residents with disabilities on the PUNS (Prioritization for Urgency of Need for Services) waiting list. Thousands more are waiting for DON (Determination of Need) assessments to become eligible for home and community-based care. What concrete steps will you support to reduce these backlogs and improve Illinois' laggard status (we rank #47) when it comes to home-based disability services for eligible Illinoisans?

I would support a streamlined process with an automatic approval on the date of application and extended deadline. I would be interested in exploring ways high-ranked states do better at reducing the backlog.
